DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 247 442 CE 039 515

AUTHOR Miguel, Richard J.; Foulk, Robert C.
TITLE Youth's Perceptions of Employer Standards. Effects on Employment Outcomes and Employer Evaluations. Executive Summary.
INSTITUTION Ohio State Univ., Columbus. National Center for Research in Vocational Education.
SPONS AGENCY National Inst. of Education (ED), Washington, DC.
PUB DATE 84
GRANT NIE-G-83-0005-P-1
NOTE 38p.; For a related document, see CE 039 516.
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Career Education; Employee Attitudes; *Employer Attitudes; Employment; Employment Level; *Employment Practices; *Employment Qualifications; *High School Graduates; *Job Performance; Personnel Selection; Secondary Education; Standards; *Student Attitudes

ABSTRACT

A study examined the high school graduates' perceptions and employers' reports of hiring and job performance standards and employment outcomes one year after high school. Longitudinal data were collected from 522 students at the beginning and end of the senior school year and 325 of these students (62 percent) one year after graduation. Employers of these graduates were surveyed at followup. During high school youth were consistently accurate in perceptions of items having positive influence on employers' job hiring standards, consistently understood several employers' job performance standards, and underestimated the importance of negative information on hiring and of negative behavior and attitudes on employers' opinions regarding job performance. Students with the best employment outcomes during the followup year were those who thought that employers had tough hiring standards but did not have tough job performance standards at the end of the senior year. Youth who received the highest evaluations of work habits and attitudes and productivity at the end of the followup year thought employers had tough hiring standards. Following this narrative of findings and study conclusions is a discussion of the implications and recommendations of the findings on youth's perceptions and a discussion of the effects of certain variables on youth's perceptions. (YLB)

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YOUTH'S PERCEPTIONS OF EMPLOYER STANDARDS: EFFECTS ON EMPLOYMENT OUTCOMES AND EMPLOYER EVALUATIONS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

THE NATIONAL CENTER FOR RESEARCH IN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION
THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY
1960 KENNY ROAD · COLUMBUS, OHIO 43210

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For further information contact:

Program Information Office
National Center for Research
in Vocational Education
The Ohio State University
1960 Kenny Road
Columbus, Ohio 43210

Telephone: (614) 486-3655 or (800) 848-4815
Cable: CTVOCEDOSU/Columbus, Ohio
Telex: 8104821894

YOUTH'S PERCEPTIONS OF EMPLOYER STANDARDS

Effects on Employment Outcomes and Employer Evaluations

Executive Summary

Richard J. Miguel
and
Robert C. Foulk

The National Center for Research in Vocational Education
The Ohio State University
1960 Kenny Road
Columbus, OH 43210

1984

FUNDING INFORMATION

Project Title:	Employability Factors Study
Grant Number:	NIE-G-83-0005, P-1
Project Number:	715029
Act under Which Funds Were Administered:	P.L. 96-88
Source of Contract:	U.S. Department of Education National Institute of Education Washington, DC 20202
Project Officer:	Ronald Bucknam
Contractor:	The National Center for Research in Vocational Education The Ohio State University Columbus, OH 43210
Executive Director:	Robert E. Taylor
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FOREWORD

The Employability Factors Study is part of a larger research program on youth employability that simultaneously examines the relationship between demand and supply variables. This study specifically focuses on youth's perceptions of employer hiring and job performance standards; determinants of youth's perceptions; changes in youth's perceptions resulting from participation in education, training, and work experiences; and relationships of youth's perceptions to employment outcomes 1 year after high school graduation. The researchers used a work socialization framework to guide the inquiry and to determine the implications of the findings for the improvement of education and training programs for youth.

We wish to express our gratitute to the National Institute of Education for sponsoring this study, and to Ronald Bucknam, Project Officer, for his guidance and support. We want to thank the members of our Research Division's advisory committee for their suggestions in the development and execution of the study. The committee consisted of Howard Rosen, Chairperson, former Director, Office of Research and Development, Employment and Training Administration; William Brooks, Director, Personnel and Public Relations, Delco Moraine Division of General Motors, Dayton, Ohio; Jose Cardenas, Director, Intercultural Developmental Research Association, San Antonio, Texas; David Clark, Professor, School of Education, Indiana University; Ellen Greenberger, Professor of Social Ecology and Social Sciences, University of California at Irvine; Charles Knapp, Senior Vice President of Operations, Tulane University; Marion Pines, Director, Mayor's Office of Manpower Resources, Baltimore, Maryland; Beatrice Reubens, Senior Research Specialist, Conservation of Human Resources, Columbia University; Peter Rossi, Director, Social and Demographic Research Institute, University of Massachusetts; and Henrietta Schwartz, Dean, School of Education, San Francisco State University.

In addition to serving on the Research Division's advisory committee, Drs. Rosen, Greenberger, and Schwartz also reviewed a working draft of this report. Others who also reviewed the report were Joseph Grannis, Professor, Columbia University, and National Center staff members Wayne Schroeder, Senior Research Specialist, and Juliet Miller, Associate Director for the Information

Systems Division. The report benefited greatly from the insightful critiques provided by these individuals.

Finally, we wish to thank all the students, employers, and staff associates with the education and training programs and the schools participating in the study. While our assurances of anonymity preclude mentioning their names, we nevertheless want to express our sincere appreciation for the time and cooperation they extended to the research staff.

Recognition is due National Center staff members John Bishop, Associate Director for the Research Division, for overseeing the study; Richard Miguel, Senior Research Specialist, for directing and reporting the study; Robert Foulk, Graduate Research Associate, for conducting and reporting the data analysis; Lisa Chiteji, Program Assistant, for assisting in collecting and processing the data; Janet Kiplinger, for editorial assistance; and Cathy Jones and Colleen Kinzelman, for typing the report.

Robert E. Taylor
Executive Director
The National Center for Research
in Vocational Education

YOUTH'S PERCEPTIONS OF EMPLOYER STANDARDS:
EFFECTS ON EMPLOYMENT OUTCOMES AND EMPLOYER EVALUATIONS

Focus and Design of the Study

Problem

There are many claims and some evidence that youth are indeed poorly prepared for work (Ginzberg 1980). Many lack an adequate orientation to work and have limited competencies. Consequently, many education and training programs have attempted to rectify the employability problems of youth by concentrating on the development of skills needed to get and keep jobs. The larger issues of socialization to work, which are an appropriate part of the solution (Anderson and Sawhill 1980), are frequently overlooked. For example, Bandura (1982) suggested that individuals often do not behave optimally even though they may have the necessary skills and attitudes and know fully what to do. Therefore, education and training programs may be providing a service by developing competencies that are needed in employment but insufficient in and of themselves for ensuring employment success.

An important aspect of employability seems to have been overlooked: youth's perceptions of employer hiring and job performance standards. Do youth understand the competencies that employers value and do they understand employers' priorities for hiring and job performance standards?

Research Questions

This study concerns two major areas of investigation. First, a description of the hiring and job performance standards was undertaken by examining employers' reports and youth's perceptions of the standards. The questions addressed were as follows:

- What is the influence of positive information regarding job search strategies, schooling and training, and work experience on employer hiring standards?
- What is the influence of negative information regarding job search strategies, schooling and training, work experience, and productivity on employer hiring standards?
- How stringent are employers' job performance standards for work ethics, attitudes, basic skills, and productivity?
- What are youth's perceptions of employer hiring and job performance standards and how do they change as a result of participation in various employability development programs?

The second area of investigation was to determine the effects of school program, work experience, and self-concepts on (1) youth's perceptions of employer standards and (2) employment outcomes and employer evaluation in the year following high school graduation. Finally, this study examined the effects of youth's perceptions of the standards on employment outcomes and employer evaluations in the year after high school graduation. The research questions addressed were as follows:

- What are the effects of high school vocational education and college preparatory program participation on--
  --youth's perceptions of employer hiring and job performance standards, and
  --employment outcomes and employer evaluations in the year following high school graduation?
- What are the effects of previous work experience on--
  --youth's perceptions of employer hiring and job performance standards, and
  --employer evaluations in the year following high school graduation?
- What are the effects of self-concepts on--
  --youth's perceptions of employer hiring and job performance standards, and
  --employment outcomes and employer evaluations in the year following high school graduation?
- What are the effects of youth's perceptions of employer hiring and job performance standards on employment outcomes and employer evaluations in the year following high school graduation?

Related Literature

The theoretical base for this study was adapted from Van Maanen's (1976) concept of organizational socialization and applied to youth's early experiences with work. Starting with anticipatory socialization, youth form attitudes and behaviors relevant to work, perceptions of what work organizations are likely to value, and expectations for their experiences in work settings. This is followed by entry into the workplace, a time when youth encounter organizational socialization forces. Depending upon the intensity and scope of the encounter, individuals can change various perceptions, adapting in ways that achieve harmony between themselves and the work organization.

Although there have been numerous studies of employers' opinions about the skills youth need to get and keep employment (e.g., Richards 1980), youth's perceptions of what is expected of them in employment have not been systematically studied.

Part of the difficulty in understanding the development of perceptions, attitudes, and other mental constructs associated with work lies in the fact that work is such a pervasive life activity. The impressions one forms of work are the result of an accumulation of experiences that begin early in childhood and develop as a result of everyday interactions with persons, objects, and events (Appelbaum and Koppel 1978). The nature and content of these experiences can be affected by a person's race and sex (Haefner 1977), socioeconomic status (Kohn 1981; Goodale 1973; Pentecost 1975; Parnes and Rich 1980), personality traits (Stern 1962; Trow 1962) family patterns (Rodman, Nichols, and Voydanoff 1969), employment status of family members and significant others (Himes 1968; Hotchkiss and Chiteji 1981), location of residence (Borus et al. 1980), exposure to work at school and through the media (Schwartz and Henderson 1964), schooling (Sewell, Hauser, and Wolf 1980), and

situational factors associated with employment and training. As individuals increase their exposure to work-related activities in the home and community and to the attitudes others hold toward work, they begin to form opinions about the importance of the attitudes and skills required for work. Eventually, these opinions shape beliefs and then attitudes, which are likely to persist until they encounter other stimuli to change them. Baumrind (1975) found that early socialization experiences can also set limits on the kind of persons adolescents become, depriving them of skills, values, and habits required by employers.

Method

In order to study youth's perceptions of employer standards within a socialization framework, longitudinal data were collected at three different times. Using exactly the same items in the three survey periods, youth indicated what they thought their current employers' hiring and work performance standards were. The dates of the three waves of data collection were at the beginning of the 1981/82 senior school year, the end of that school year, and one year after graduation (June 1983). Longitudinal data were also collected on three aspects of the youth's self-concepts: self-esteem, locus of control, and work ethic. To study the effects of schooling and work on perceptions of the standards, youth were surveyed on various aspects of their educational activities and work experience for the year preceding the first survey and for the time periods between surveys.

In order to make comparisons between the youth's perceptions of the standards and employers' actual standards, we administered a survey questionnaire to the youth's employers at follow-up. This survey required the employers to report their standards, using exactly the same items that the youth rated. The employers also provided data on demographics and selected firm characteristics.

The final aspect of the design of the study concerned the relationship of the perceptions to outcome measures. The youth follow-up data included measures of employment outcomes during the year after high school: number of weeks worked, unemployment, turnover of jobs, amount of training received, and hourly wage. The employer data at followup included their evaluations of the youth's workmanship and job skills, work habits and attitudes, basic academic skill, and productivity as they related to the jobs the youth held.

Sample

The subjects of the study were students enrolled in employability development programs in the secondary schools of three cities--one in the Midwest, the South, and the East. Exhibit 1 provides a description of these programs. In order to compare the findings of these program groups to others, most of the seniors in five of those city's high schools were also surveyed. Of the 522 seniors in the original sample, 325 completed questionnaires during the post-high school follow-up. This represents a 62 percent follow-up rate. The follow-up sample is actually a subsample of 971 youth who completed the surveys during the 1981-82 school year.

EXHIBIT 1

EMPLOYABILITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM PROFILES

Career Centers

Career centers are separate facilities in a public high school system to which city high schools act as "feeder schools." These career centers provide intensive training for part of the school day as preparation for specific career fields that students may wish to enter. Among the occupational fields are cosmetology, food preparation, health care, performing arts, electrical work, carpentry and construction, laboratory technician work, and auto mechanics. Students receive all of their training at the career centers, which provide them with certificates of program completion and skill acquisition. The purpose of the career centers is to provide a variety of job preparation programs that will help youth develop skills and work habits that will enable them to obtain entry-level jobs in a chosen occupational area.

CETA Youth Employment Program (CETA)

This Comprehensive Employment and Training Act: Youth Employment and Training Program (CETA) is for youth who have dropped out of school or are potential dropouts. The program offers assistance to those in need of employability services and most able to benefit from them. It assists clients in developing skills necessary for self-reliance, particularly in relation to job search. It encourages employers to emphasize what the participants can become as a result of services and training offered and to deemphasize the past experiences of the participants. The educational goals for the participants are to obtain either a high school diploma, to pass the GED examination, or to improve their functional reading level, depending upon their designated curriculum. The placement goal is that all completers will obtain an unsubsidized placement or other positive termination (such as high school diploma, GED, return to school, transfer to other programs), or will meet grade-level improvement through remediation.

Cooperative Office Education (COE)

This 1-year cooperative office education (COE) program provides students with an excellent opportunity to gain valuable supervised experience through cooperation between the schools and business. The program is planned for students who have developed their skills to a level that is acceptable for employment in a business office at the beginning of grade 12. The purpose of this program is to provide an opportunity for on-the-job experience during the senior year. Students spend 90 minutes daily in the COE classroom laboratory. Students may elect another course in business education. Most trainees attend school one-half day and work at a job station for the remainder of the day.

Distributive Education (DE)

Students enrolled in this 1-year cooperative distributive education (DE) program participate in on-the-job training at area retailers, wholesalers, and service-selling businesses. The program is designed for students considering a career in retailing, wholesaling, and service-selling businesses. The primary objective of the program is to prepare youth for full-time employment

in the distributive occupations--selling, marketing, merchandising, and other occupations concerned with the flow of goods from the producer to the consumer. DE consists of 90 minutes of related classroom study in marketing and distribution and 2 periods of required courses. Students are dismissed early in the day to report to their training stations for on-the-job training.

Experience-Based Career Education: (EBCE)

This experience-based career education (EBCE) program is open to all students in grades 9 through 12. EBCE is designed to help youth know themselves better by refining their interests, abilities, and values in order to develop realistic and obtainable career and life goals; to learn that basic skills in communications and mathematics are essential and relevant for accomplishing their career and personal goals; and to gain a broad understanding of the world of work by learning what they can expect from it and what it will require of them. The academic resource center is an individualized instructional system. The center focuses primarily on English and mathematics, providing multipurpose work space for students to use as they develop skills suited to career goals and ability levels. Exploration is a career awareness activity in which group instruction is combined with individual learning projects conducted in the community. Instead of learning about one job on 1 site, students rotate among as many as 15 sites to learn about as many career possibilities as they can. In this EBCE model, youth spend 1 day at the work site.

Office Education (OE)

The office education (OE) program is a 2-year program designed to provide skills acceptable for employment in a business office upon graduation. This program is intended primarily for students without office training and consists of in-school training during the entire junior year and the first semester of the senior year. During the last semester of the senior year, participants are placed at the work sites for on-the-job training. Students must have an interest in pursuing an office career and they must have developed a skill acceptable for employment by the end of the first semester of the senior year.

Work-Study Program

The work-study program is designed to permit students to pursue employment in trade and industrial occupations during the school day and to pursue academic courses required for graduation. Students attend classes during the mornings and are released for the remainder of the day for work experience. In addition to enrollment in a general high school curriculum, students receive employability development instruction and job placement services from the work experience coordinator. The purpose of this program is to provide paid work experience and to ensure the completion of courses leading to a high school diploma.

No Program

These secondary school students were not enrolled in any employability development program during the data collection year. They were included in the sample for comparison purposes.

The employer data set consists of 143 persons who were supervisors of the youth at the time of the follow-up survey. The supervisors completed the survey within 1 month after the youth's survey. Since 240 of the 325 youth provided the names and addresses of their employers, the 143 employers represent a response rate of 60 percent.

Hiring and Job Performance Factors Included in the Survey

The literature represents a broad and sweeping view of the youth employment problem and employability development strategies. Rather than pinpointing specific skill-related sources of employment problems, the literature suggests a number of general traits and basic skills that youth need to get and keep jobs. The following is a description of six factors indicated in the literature as having an influence on employer standards: job search behavior, schooling and training (e.g., basic academic and vocational skills), work ethics, attitudes, work experience, and productivity. Accompanying the description of each factor are the items included on the hiring and job performance scales of the employer and youth surveys.

Job search factors. Job search skills have received much attention in the literature. Borus and his associates (1980) concluded that the most disadvantaged persons in the labor market are substantially less knowledgeable about how to operate in the labor market. Among these skills are identifying job opportunities, using networks and contacts, writing resumes, filling out job applications, interviewing, and following up on job contacts. The job search items included in this survey are listed in exhibit 2.

EXHIBIT 2

JOB SEARCH ITEMS INCLUDED IN THE SURVEY

Hiring Standards (Positive Information)	Hiring Standards (Negative Information)
- Looked clean and neat at the interview	- Gave false information on job application
- Filled out job application in a neat and correct manner	- Was convicted for possession of marijuana
- Attached a complete job resume to application	- Was late for interview appointment
- Asked many questions about the job or the company during the interview	- Got confused when asked a simple question
- Called employer after interview to show interest in getting the job	- Asked for 25 cents more than the job normally pays
- Understood that a beginner sometimes does boring and low-level work tasks	

Schooling and training factors. Employers are very concerned about basic academic skills, trainability, and the ability to learn (Kline 1969; Murphy 1969; Richards 1980; Taggart 1981). These general or fundamental skills have been variously interpreted in numerous surveys and other inquiries on the subject. To put it simply, it is well known that employers expect young people to be able, if required, to read, speak, write, and use mathematics well enough to carry on everyday work operations. Further, they expect youth to be able to grasp simple instructions, to learn simple job duties quickly, and to use good judgement and reasoning in executing job tasks.

Job skills and training represent only a small portion of factors contributing to youth's early job search success. This seems to be due to the fact that either most youth possess the skills needed for the jobs they can get or can be trained to acquire those skills within a few weeks of informal on-the-job training. Surveys of employers (e.g., Richard 1980) have shown that job skills often do not figure prominently in the reasons that youth do not get and keep jobs. The obvious exceptions are jobs requiring specific skills such as typists, computer programmer, and machinist. However, these jobs represent only a small part of jobs high school youth obtain.

The schooling and training items included in this survey are listed in exhibit 3.

EXHIBIT 3

SCHOOLING AND TRAINING ITEMS INCLUDED ON THE SURVEY

Hiring Standards (Positive Information)	Hiring Standards (Negative Information)	Job Performance Standards
- Got A's and B's in all math courses	- Couldn't read a newspaper	- Makes many mistakes adding, subtracting, multiplying, or dividing numbers
- Had taken vocational education curriculum in high school	- Used poor grammar when speaking	- Can't read written directions to complete a job
- Had training in the job skills for this job but no experience	- Was absent 12 times in last school year	- Speaks so poorly that co-workers can't understand what is being said
	- Had not completed high school	- Doesn't write telephone messages or memos that are easy to understand
		- Makes many mistakes in spelling, grammar, and punctuation
		- Tries but takes twice as long as other workers to learn a job
		- Needs twice as much supervision as others

Work ethic factors. Work ethics and attitudes are disproportionately mentioned in the literature as factors contributing to employment success. Deficiencies in these factors are repeatedly cited as reasons why youth do not keep jobs (Adams and Mangum 1978; Dodd 1981; Ellwood 1980; Leach and Nelson 1978; Passmore 1982; Wilson 1973). Whereas attitudinal items appear in many forms, employers seem to be most concerned with work ethics (Weber 1958). Many items in this category relate to employers' concerns with efficiency, control, and order in the behavior of workers. Among those often mentioned are showing respect for authority, being punctual, using established procedures, following rules and directions, completing work on time, and using supplies and equipment carefully. The work ethic items included in this survey are listed in exhibit 4.

EXHIBIT 4

WORK ETHIC FACTORS INCLUDED IN THE SURVEY

Job Performance Standards

- Shows up for work drunk or stoned
- Doesn't call in when sick
- Causes $100 of damage to a piece of equipment
- Refuses to do a job because it is undesirable or "beneath his/her dignity"
- Puts more hours on time sheet than actually worked
- Is 20 minutes late to work and has no good excuse
- Misses 2 different days of work in first month
- Spends 15 minutes making personal telephone calls during 1 work day

Work experience factors. Previous work experience can be a powerful tool for preparing youth for future employment. However, Taggart (1981) suggested that work alone may not increase employability or employment chances. Other researchers have found that the development of employability is possible through work experience, but work experience might not be as optimally beneficial for youth as some claim it is. Greenberger, Steinberg, and Ruggerio (1982) also stressed that early work experience can foster attitudes and behaviors that future employers might consider imcompatible or undesirable. The work experience items included in this survey are listed in exhibit 5.

EXHIBIT 5

WORK EXPERIENCE ITEMS INCLUDED IN THIS SURVEY

Hiring Standards (Positive Information)

- Had a previous employer who would rehire him/her
- Had only done jobs like lawn mowing, baby-sitting, and delivering newspapers

Hiring Standards (Negative Information)

- Was absent from work 12 times last year
- Was late for work three times last year
- Had three jobs in the last 6 months
- Had never worked before

Attitudinal factors. Many socially desirable attitudes are explicitly mentioned in the literature or can be inferred from employers' statements of desirable job performance. Among the most common are initiative, responsibility, cooperation, ambition, loyalty, self-directedness, even-temperedness, stability, perseverance, helpfulness, cheerfulness, reliability, dependability, industriousness, sociability, thoughtfulness, courtesy, friendliness, alertness, and good judgment. Athough this is not the place to interpret the various meanings of these traits, it should be pointed out that some of these terms may be euphemisms for other desired traits. For example, "cooperation" may be another way of saying "compliance"; "self-directedness" may mean "does not need a great deal of supervision and training," rather than "independent in thought and action."

Rosenfeld (1982) cited a recent survey of businesses to determine what they wanted most from schools: more basic education, more training, more vocational education, more shop experience, or better work attitudes. He reported that those surveyed overwhelmingly chose better attitudes. Others have found that altering or developing certain attitudes and social skills has proven to be important in removing barriers to employment (Evans 1978; Frost 1974) and improving job performance (National Commission for Employment Policy 1979). The attitudinal items included in this survey are listed in exhibit 6.

EXHIBIT 6

ATTITUDINAL FACTORS INCLUDED IN THE SURVEY

Job Performance Standards

- Acts angry or sulks when criticized
- Gets into an argument with co-workers
- Gripes about working conditions like short coffee breaks or working unpopular shifts
- Comes to work dirty and sloppy
- Wears flashy or sexy clothes at work

Productivity and effort factors. An employee's productivity is a major concern to employers. They expect employees to be productive; otherwise they would not hire them. However, their expectations for the productivity of young new workers are unclear. Richards (1980) found that productivity was a top priority of only 34 percent of the employers in his survey. More of these employers rated positive attitudes, basic skills, and craftmanship as top priorities. Since young workers might require some time to become as productive as other workers in the same job, the level of effort--a trait that employers highly value--might affect employers' standards concerning productivity. The productivity items included in this survey are listed in exhibit 7.

EXHIBIT 7

PRODUCTIVITY AND EFFORT FACTORS INCLUDED IN THE SURVEY

Hiring Standards (Negative Information)

- Was 15% less productive than other workers in last job even though he/she was trying
- Was 15% less productive than others workers in last job because he/she wasn't trying

Job Performance Standards

- Tries but is 15% less productive than other workers with the same training
- Doesn't try and is 15% less productive than other workers with the same training
- Seems not to be trying but is no less productive than other workers
- Takes an extra hour of break time but finishes assigned work
- Finishes work assigned but does not report back to supervisor for more work

Findings

Employers' Reports of the Standards

The following summarizes (1) the employers' reports of hiring and job performance standards and (2) youth's perceptions of those standards during the senior year of high school.

1. Employers would be most influenced to hire youth who used good job search strategies:
   - Looked clean and neat at the interview
   - Filled out the job application in a neat and correct manner
   - Attached a complete resume to the job application
   - Asked many questions about the job or company during the interview
   - Called employer after interview to show interest in getting the job (see table 1)

2. Employers would be most influenced not to hire youth due to excessively negative information regarding their job search strategies, basic skills, previous work experience, and effort:
   - Falsified the job application
   - Couldn't read
   - Had high absenteeism in previous job
   - Had been unproductive in previous job because of low effort
   - Had high turnover in previous jobs (see table 1)

3. Employers would be most inclined to fire youth in the early months of employment the first time they violated company rules or were not making an effort to improve their productivity:
   - Showed up for work drunk or stoned
   - Cheated on their time sheets
   - Refused to do a job
   - Didn't call in when sick
   - Were unproductive because of low effort
   - Were late to work and did not have a good excuse (see table 2)

4. Employers reported that all the other job-performance problems (i.e., those related to company rules, attitudes, basic skills, and productivity) were serious enough to merit discussing them immediately with employees (see table 2).

Youth's Perceptions of Employer Standards during High School

5. Youth were consistently accurate in their perceptions of the items having the most positive influence on employer's hiring standards.

6. Youth consistently understood that falsifying a job application could result in not being hired. However, at the beginning of the senior year youth did not think that employers would be as tough on job applicants who in previous jobs:

- Had not tried to improve productivity
- Had been unproductive on previous jobs
- Had high absenteeism
- Couldn't read
- Had high turnover

7. At the end of the senior year, youth in vocational education programs became more aware that employers would be tough on the above items. However, nonprogram and CETA youth thought they would be even less tough on those items.

8. Youth consistently understood that employers' job performance standards were tough for being late for work without a good excuse, cheating on time sheets, and for low productivity caused by low effort. However, they underestimated the seriousness of:
   - showing up for work drunk or stoned
   - refusing to do a job
   - not calling in when sick

9. Many youth also underestimated employers' job performance standards for:
   - Missing work during the first month of employment
   - Griping about work conditions
   - Making many computational errors

The following summarizes (1) the effects of school program, work experience, and self concept on youth's perceptions of employer standards and (2) the effects of youth's perceptions, school program, work experience, and self-concept on employment outcomes and employer evaluations in the year following high school. Table 3 is a summary of the significant effects of these variables.

Effects of School Program, Previous Work Experience, and Self-Concepts on Youth's Perceptions of Employer Standards

10. Youth who perceived that employers had tough hiring standards at various points in the survey were youth who:
    - participated in vocational education programs for fewer than 20 class hours
    - completed the college preparatory program
    - worked the most during the year following high school graduation
    - had the highest self-esteem

11. Youth who perceived that employers had tough job performance standards at various points in the survey were youth who:
    - had not taken vocational education courses
    - had worked the least during the year following high school graduation
    - had high self-esteem
    - strongly felt that they were responsible for what happened to themselves (i.e., high internal locus of control)

Employment Outcomes during the Year
Following High School Graduation

12. Youth who worked the most weeks and were unemployed the least during the follow-up year were youth who:
    - thought at the end of the senior year that employers had tough hiring standards
    - thought at the end of the senior year that employers did not have tough job performance standards
    - worked the most during the senior year of high school

13. Youth who had the lowest job turnover during the follow-up year were youth who:
    - most strongly felt that they were responsible for what happened to themselves (i.e., high internal locus of control)

14. Youth who received the most on-the-job training during the follow-up year were youth who:
    - worked the most during the senior year
    - most strongly felt that other persons were responsible for what happened to them (i.e., high external locus of control)
    - had the lowest work ethic

15. Youth who earned the highest hourly wage during the follow-up year were youth who:
    - had taken vocational education courses during the senior year
    - worked the most during the senior year
    - worked the most during the follow-up year

Employer Evaluations during the Year
Following High School Graduation

16. Youth who received the highest evaluations of work habits and attitudes at the end of the followup year were youth who:
    - thought that employers had tough hiring standards
    - had the highest work ethic

17. Youth who received the highest evaluations of basic academic skills at the end of the followup year were youth who:
    - most strongly felt that they were responsible for what happened to themselves (i.e., high internal locus of control).

18. Youth who received the highest evaluations of productivity at the end of the followup year were youth who:
    - thought that employers had tough hiring standards

TABLE 1

EMPLOYERS' RATINGS OF HIRING STANDARDS (POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE ITEMS)

Employer Median	Positive Information	Employer Median	Negative Information
	Job Search Factors		Job Search Factors
2.67	Looked clean and neat at the interview	2.72	Gave false information on job application
2.05	Filled out job application in a neat and correct manner	1.69	Was convicted for possession of marijuana
		1.57	Was late for interview appointment
1.91	Attached a complete job resume to application	1.38	Got confused when asked a simple question
1.89	Asked many questions about the job or company during the interview	.39	Asked for 25 cents more than the job normally pays
1.77	Called employer after interview to show interest in getting the job		
1.69	Understood that a beginner sometimes does boring and low-level work tasks		
	Schooling and Training Factors		Schooling and Training Factors
1.42	Had training in the job skills needed for this job but no experience	2.48	Couldn't read a newspaper
		1.46	Used poor grammar when speaking
1.40	Got A's and B's in all math courses	1.19	Was absent 12 times in last school year
1.16	Had taken vocational education curriculum in high school	1.16	Had not completed high school
	Work Experience Factors		Work Experience Factors
1.68	Had a previous employer who would rehire him/her	2.04	Was absent from work 12 times last year
		1.73	Had 3 jobs in last 6 months
.32	Had only done jobs like lawn mowing, baby-sitting, and delivering newspapers	.59	Was late for work three times last year
		.08	Had never worked before
			Productivity and Effort Factors
		1.93	Was 15% less productive than other workers in his/her last job even though he/she wasn't trying
		.80	Was 15% less productive than other workers in last job even though he/she was trying

TABLE 2

EMPLOYERS' RATINGS OF JOB PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

Employer Median	Factors
	Work Ethic Factors
5.51	Shows up for work drunk or stoned
4.97	Puts more hours on time sheet than actually worked
4.33	Refuses to do a job because it undesirable or "beneath his/her dignity"
4.32	Doesn't call in when sick
3.79	Is 20 minutes late to work and has no good excuse
3.66	Causes $100 of damage to a piece of equipment
3.55	Spends 15 minutes making personal telephone calls during a work day
	Attitude Factors
3.18	Acts angry or sulks when criticized
3.15	Comes to work dirty or sloppy
3.07	Gets into an argument with co-workers
2.86	Gripes about working conditions like short coffee breaks or unpopular shifts
2.81	Wears flashy or sexy clothes to work
	Basic Skills Factors
3.25	Needs twice as much supervision as others
3.20	Makes many mistakes adding, subtracting, multiplying, dividing numbers
3.12	Can't read written directions to complete a job
3.03	Speaks so poorly that co-workers can't understand what is being said
2.92	Doesn't write telephone messages or memos that are easy to understand
2.70	Makes many mistakes in spelling, grammar, and punctuation
2.56	Tries but takes twice as long as other workers to learn a new job
	Productivity Factors
4.07	Doesn't try and is 15% less productive than other workers with same training
3.14	Takes an extra hour of break time but finishes assigned work
2.99	Finishes work assigned but does not report back to supervisor for more work
2.73	Tries but is 15% less productive than other workers with same training
2.53	Seems not to be trying but is no less productive than other workers

TABLE 3

SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCE IN PERCEPTIONS AND FOLLOW-UP OUTCOMES

	School Program		Experience		Self-concepts			Perceptions of Standards		
	Cooperative Vocational Education	In-school Vocational Education	College Prep	Work Experience	Self-Esteem	Internal Locus of Control	Work Ethic	Hiring Standards (positive)	Hiring Standards (negative)	Job Performance Standards
Hiring Standards (positive information)	...	...	...	...	+.122*	.146* (T1) +.118*	... (T2) .166**	NA	NA	NA
Hiring Standards (Negative Information)	...	...	+.389*** (T2)	+.006* (T3)	+.178*** (T3)	...	...	NA	NA	NA
Job Performance Standards	-.376**** (T1)	-.249* (T1)	...	-.010*** (T3)	+.123* (T3)	+.135* (T2)	...	NA	NA	NA
Employment outcomes (T3)										
Weeks worked	...	...	...	+6.72*** (T2)	...	...	...	...	+2.37** (T2)	-3.42*** (T2)
Unemployed (months)	...	...	...	-.480*** (T2)	...	+.350* (T2)	...	...	-.349** (T2)	...
Turnover	...	...	...	...	...	-.111* (T2)	...	...	...	...
Training	...	...	...	+.530*** (T2)	...	-.369* (T2)	-.496*** (T2)	...	...	...
Hourly Wage	+.27*	+.40***	...	+.046*(T2) +.20* (T3)	...	...	...	...	...	...
Employer evaluations (TC)										
Workmanship & job skills	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Work habits & attitudes	...	...	...	...	...	...	+3.03** (T3)	+2.76* (T3)	+3.52 (T3)	...
Basic academic skills	...	...	...	...	...	+6.85** (T3)	...	...	...	...
Productivity	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	+4.36* (T3)	...

Note: The above models are identical to those presented in Part II except that the only school variables included were school program dummies.

* $p <= .10$
** $p <= .05$
*** $p <= .01$
**** $p <= .0001$

T1 = beginning of senior year.
T2 = end of senior year.
T3 = end of following year.

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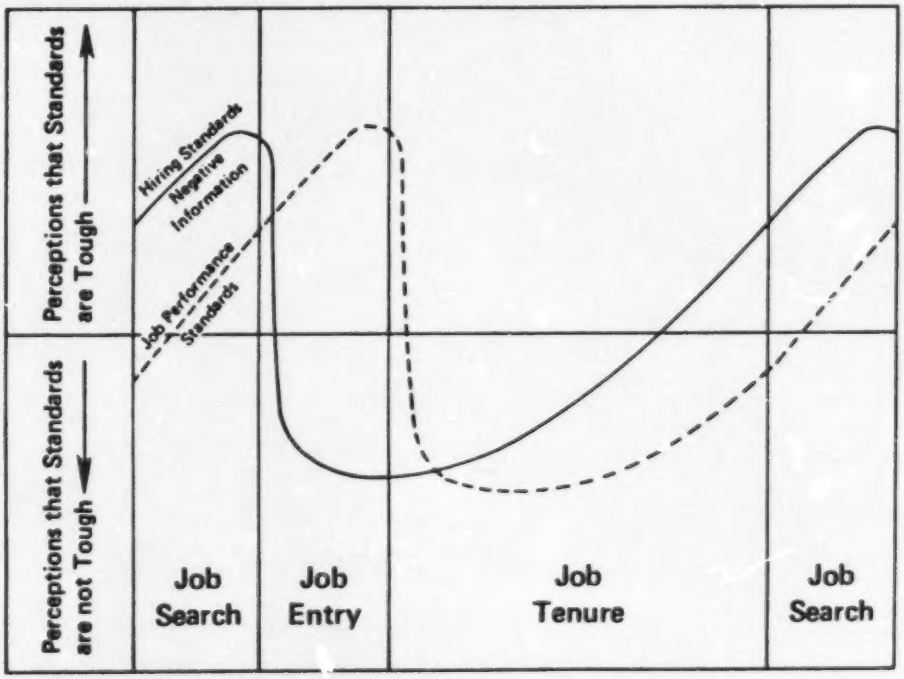
Conclusions

The knowledge gained through this study has provided some insight into youth's perceptions of employer standards. The findings revealed that it is not only a matter of youth knowing and valuing what employers expect in their hiring and job performance standards, but also a matter of when they perceive standards as strict or relaxed. Youth's perceptions alternated between being concerned about the standards (rating them higher) or being relaxed about them (rating them lower). For example, an increase in perceiving that employers are tough on negative information in hiring standards was followed by a decrease in those perceptions.

When youth were first exposed to work through school or actual work experience, youth perceived standards as being tougher. This was followed by perceptions of the same standards as being more relaxed. In terms of Van Maanen's work socialization model of entry, encounter, and change, perceptions of hiring standards were tougher before job entry then attenuated. Job performance standards were perceived as being tougher at job entry then attenuated. As youth remained in a job, perceptions of job performance standards leveled off (i.e., differences in perceptions diminished), and for some of these youth, perceptions of the influence of negative information on hiring standards began to rise, signaling a new transition. To delineate these patterns in the perceptions accurately, more frequent measures of the perceptions are needed. The figure below suggests what the patterns may look like, piecing together the data that are available.

EXHIBIT 8

CHANGES IN PERCEPTIONS OVER TIME



Youth who perceived that negative information highly influenced hiring decisions at the end of the senior year worked more weeks and were unemployed less. Youth with similar perceptions at follow-up were rated more highly on employer evaluations at follow-up. Participating in vocational education and college preparatory programs and work experience was positively related to increasing youth's perceptions of the influence of negative information in hiring standards. For vocational education students, this increase in perceptions apparently preceded the data collection at the beginning of the senior year. Analysis of the number of hours of vocational education in-school and cooperative experiences revealed that youth who had taken fewer than 20 hours of vocational education rated the standards higher. As the number of hours increased beyond that point, the perceptions attenuated. Since vocational students are successfully established in the labor market earlier than other students, this attenuation in perceptions most likely indicates that the transition had gone smoothly. On the other hand, college preparatory youth, upon graduation from high school, were the most concerned about the influence of negative information on hiring standards, rating it higher. For them the transition to the workplace seems to be greater at that time. These findings lend support to the conclusion that perceiving employers to be highly influenced by negative information in hiring standards will result in better employment outcomes and a successful transition to new jobs.

Youth who perceived that job standards were tougher were not more successful in the labor market and received lower employer evaluations. Having taken vocational education in high school and extensive work experience, on the other hand, were related to perceiving these standards as more relaxed. This suggests that youth who are continuing to perceive these standards as being tough are still attempting to make successful transitions into the labor market. The best support for this conclusion is the data on the number of hours of youth's high school vocational education and work experience. As these hours increased, youth began to perceive job standards as being tougher. However, after a relatively short time perceptions of these standards also attenuated.

Implications and Recommendations for Education

The following is a discussion of the implications and recommendations of the findings on youth's perceptions of the various factors related to hiring and job performance standards. This section culminates with the implications and recommendations related to the findings on the effects of secondary school program, work experience, and self-concepts on youth's perceptions of the standards and the effects of all these variables on employment outcomes and employer evaluations in the year following graduation.

Employer Standards (Job Search Factors)

Recommendation 1: Provide training in job-search strategies within the context of other factors affecting employer hiring standards, especially factors concerning negative information about the prospective job seeker.

Summary of findings. Employers reported that job search strategies had a very strong influence on their hiring standards. Positive information about job search had a stronger influence on these standards than positive information on other factors. Very negative information about job search also had a strong influence, inclining employers not to hire youth.

All youth, whether in employability programs or not, perceived the strong influence of positive information about job search strategies at the beginning and end of the senior year. Youth's perceptions of the influence of negative information regarding job search strategies were reasonably accurate at the end of the senior year. They tended to perceive these items as slightly less important at the beginning of the year, however.

Implications. Whereas these youth generally understand the importance of job search strategies on employer hiring standards, there was a tendency to perceive positive information as more influential than negative information. Since employers' hiring standards were particularly stringent on very negative information about any hiring factor, youth may conclude that these factors are not important and that positive job search strategies may compensate for those factors. The difficulty with this notion is that many youth can learn these job search strategies rather easily (e.g., dressing neatly for interviews). As a result, the employers will interview many applicants who will demonstrate good job search strategies and sort out only the few who do not. Then other factors such as work experience and schooling may become the deciding factors.

Employer Standards (Schooling and Training Factors)

Recommendation 2: Identify secondary school youth who have not mastered the fundamentals of basic academic subject matter and provide instruction, preferably integrated with learning experiences in the community, to ensure that they will be functionally competent before they reach working age.

Recommendation 3: Help youth demonstrate in job-seeking strategies (e.g., resumes) the benefits of their vocational education and job training by relating this work preparation to employers' needs.

Summary of findings. Employers were only slightly influenced in their hiring standards by high achievement in basic skills, vocational education courses, and job skill training. Youth tended to overestimate the influence of these factors on the employers. On the other hand, employers were considerably more influenced by negative information about basic skills (e.g., not being able to read well). Employers also considered job performance problems related to basic skills serious enough to discuss them immediately with their new employees. Math errors and reading problems were especially of concern to employers. Youth in general tended to underestimate the seriousness of negative information on basic skills in hiring standards but perceived the seriousness of job performance problems related to basic skills. Youth in vocational education programs, however, perceived the hiring standards regarding negative information more like employers did at the end of their programs. In contrast these youth perceived the job performance standards for basic skills as slightly less serious at the end of their programs.

Implications. There has been a great deal of emphasis on basic academic skills in recent years. Employers have consistently reported that these skills are important in jobs. This has led in many cases to greater emphasis on basic academic skills in schools to improve employability. The data from this study seem to indicate that there seems to be a point of diminishing return in terms of proficiency in this area. However, deficiencies in basic skills appear to be a serious liability for youth. Regardless of the extent to which reading is essential to job performance, the vast majority of employers indicated that they would not hire someone who "could not read a newspaper." They also indicated that making many errors in basic math would be a serious problem on the job. This suggests that employers expect young employees to be functionally literate--to be competent in the fundamentals of math, reading, writing, listening, and speaking.

The absence of tough hiring standards for having had vocational education and job training is perplexing. Youth, and probably the general public, believe that these factors have a greater influence than employers do. This may have been because employers in this sample do not depend on these factors. Nevertheless, all other things being equal, having taken vocational education and having the training needed for the job could give youth an advantage (albeit a slight one) over others who lack these experiences.

Employer Standards (Work Experience)

Recommendation 4: Provide youth with periodic assessment and vocational guidance to help them understand the consequences of work experiences and to minimize occasions for accruing a poor work record.

Summary of findings. Employers are very much influenced by information about work experience in their hiring standards. Their standards were especially tough on negative information about work experience (e.g., high absenteeism and frequently changing jobs). Youth generally did not perceive these standards accurately at the beginning and end of the senior year. Youth in programs (except for CETA), however, did begin to perceive these standards more like the employers did. The only item youth thought employers would be tougher on than employers did was having no work experience.

Implications. Youth who do not have the benefit of guided work experiences do not seem to understand the seriousness of accruing a poor work experience record. Over time this will doubtlessly cause them difficulty in job-seeking and job-keeping efforts. Their relative indifference to their attendance record and job hopping seems to be a carryover from school and other early experiences. For example, they also tended to think that high school absences were less consequential than employers did. As will be discussed later under "work ethics," employers have very stringent standards for following their rules and policies.

Employer Standards (Work Ethics)

Recommendation 5: Make youth keenly aware of the high priority employers place on strict adherence to company rules and policies.

Summary of findings. Employers reported more stringent job performance standards for work ethics factors than for any other factors. Showing up for work drunk or stoned, refusing to do a job because it was undesirable, not calling in when sick, and absenteeism were items most likely to get young employees fired. Vocational education youth, after being in their programs a few months thought that employers would be toughest on these items. By the end of the senior year, most youth were in agreement with employers on the seriousness of these standards.

Implications. In addition to understanding that job performance standards are most stringent for work ethic factors, youth must demonstrate this understanding in the early months of employment. If they do not, it is unlikely that they will be able to keep their jobs. Many employers are very explicit about what they expect and will not tolerate young employees' violations of company rules and policies. Some employers even have these standards written out and employees are asked to sign a statement indicating their awareness of these standards. It is important, therefore, for youth to pay strict attention to these matters. Many vocational and career programs help youth make a successful transition by ensuring that youth meet the standards, helping them understand the significance and consequences of their behavior.

Employer Standards (Attitudes)

Recommendation 6: Make youth aware of attitudes that can affect their job performance and provide them with constructive strategies for dealing with work situations that may evoke inappropriate displays of attitudes.

Summary of findings. Employers reported that job performance problems related to attitudes are serious enough to discuss those problems immediately. Although less serious than work-ethic-related problems in the early months of employment, problems related to poor attitudes are not likely to be overlooked. Youth generally understood this and were generally in line with employers on their perceptions of these standards.

Implications. Employers seemed to be relatively tolerant of the kinds of attitudinal problems represented in these job performance standards (e.g., sulking when criticized, being argumentative, griping). However, their indicated response (i.e., discuss it immediately) shows a tendency to "nip this behavior in the bud." Persistent displays of poor attitudes are likely to result in dismissal, especially if they interfere with anyone's performance and productivity.

Employer Standards (Productivity and Effort)

Recommendation 7: Develop specific educational activities in all areas of secondary school curriculum that teach youth how to be more productive and encourage youth to put forth the effort to increase their productivity on the job.

Summary of findings. Employers regarded low productivity as a serious matter in their hiring and job performance standards. Productivity associated with low effort was particularly serious, strongly inclining employers not to hire youth or to fire them if they already had the job. Youth, in general, underestimated employer standards for productivity and effort at the beginning and end of their senior year in high school. The discrepancy was particularly notable for "low productivity and low effort" in hiring standards.

Implications. Youth consistently underestimated the employer standards for productivity and effort more than any other factors associated with employer standards. In as much as employers are less tolerant of low productivity resulting from low effort, youth can seriously jeopardize their chances in job seeking and job keeping. This is an area that must be given more serious consideration by the youth and by the vocational and career programs in which they enroll.

Since employers generally are concerned about the productivity of youth, it is important for educators and trainers to give special attention to this problem. Instilling habits of industry in youth is by no means a new topic, but by and large, educational strategies to accomplish this goal seem to be lacking. Specific teaching and learning activities need to be developed to teach youth how to be more productive. This type of productivity training could easily be integrated into many areas of curriculum. The specific intent of this training should be to help youth obtain optimum results from efficient use of their time. This problem is not merely to make youth aware that they need to make better use of their time, but to teach them how to go about doing it.

Effects of Secondary School Programs on Perceptions and Outcomes

Recommendation 8: Encourage youth to take at least one vocational or career education course in close proximity to when they are considering employment in order to improve their chances for getting and keeping jobs.

Recommendation 9: Encourage youth to enroll in a continuous sequence of increasingly rigorous academic courses in order to enhance their ability to perceive employer standards in appropriate ways at times that will be most beneficial to their employment pursuits.

Summary of findings. Participating in vocational education and college preparatory programs does provide benefits for youth in terms of their perceptions of employer standards and their employment outcomes. Vocational education youth perceived job performance standards as less stringent than others at the beginning of the senior year. These youth had been in their programs

for at least 2 months, having received extensive orientation to the standards. Cooperative program youth had been on the job for about 3 months. The latter group viewed job performance standards significantly lower than all others. College preparatory youth perceived that negative information had greatest influence on employer hiring standards at the end of the senior year.

In separate analyses, the number of vocational class and work site hours was positively related to perceiving standards as being tougher. The interesting finding in this regard was that it did not take a very high number of hours to get these effects. In fact, a higher number of hours was negatively related to the perceptions. Also, the number of academic courses was positively related to perceptions of the standards. As the number increased, the tougher youth viewed the standards.

Perceiving hiring and job performance standards as these program youth did was related positively to employment outcomes. The net effect for school program on employment outcomes, however, was significant only for vocational students who received the highest hourly wage in the year following high school. Although not significantly correlated, both vocational and college preparatory majors were evaluated more highly by their employers than nonprogram youth in the year following graduation.

Implications. Youth who had taken vocational education courses (both cooperative and in-school programs) and youth who had taken college preparatory courses were better off than nonprogram youths in terms of their employability. Their perceptions of standards heightened at times when they sought employment and during the early stages of job entry. These programs helped youth to send the appropriate signals to employers (i.e., they took employer standards seriously).

Effects of Work Experience on Perceptions and Outcomes

Recommendation 10: Provide youth who intend to make a transition into full-time employment after high school with vocational guidance to formulate a career plan, so that their early work experiences will build progressively on one another.

Summary of findings. There were no net effects of working while in high school on youth's perceptions of employer standards. However, youth who worked the most the year after high school perceived that employers would be less tough on job performance standards and tougher on hiring standards. On the other hand, youth who worked more in high school worked more weeks, were unemployed less, and received more training at the workplace during the year after graduation. Although not significant, youth who worked more in high school and the follow-up year tended to get higher employer evaluations on all competency areas except productivity.

Implications. Increasingly the number of hours of work experience apparently makes youth "more comfortable" with the jobs they hold. They seem to be successful in broadening their work experience records, but at the same time seem to develop a restlessness with their present situations, beginning

to give more serious attention again to hiring standards. This could mean that youth who worked a great deal in the year after graduation are contemplating another major transition that could improve their employment situation.

Effects of Self-concepts on Perceptions and Outcomes

Recommendation 11: Provide youth with self-assessment guidance activities to help them link self-knowledge with their occupational and career needs.

Summary of findings. Youth with high self-esteem and strong internal locus of control rated employer standards higher than youth with low self-esteem and strong external locus of control. However, none of the measures of self-concepts (including one's commitment to the work ethic) were positively related to employment outcomes in the year following high school graduation. High scores on the three self-concept measures were positively related to employers' evaluations in the year following graduation. However, there were no significant relationships for self-esteem. High internal control was signficantly and positively related to evaluations of basic academic skills. High commitment to the work ethic was significantly and positively related to evaluations of work habits and attitudes.

Implications. Youth have a variety of self-concepts, many of which seem to have implications for their work-related behaviors. The positive effects on evaluations of basic skills and work habits and attitudes seem to be consistent. However, whereas positive self-concepts were related to perceiving standards as more stringent, the absence of effects on employment outcomes is surprising. This lack of relationships might be due to the fact that generally, most of the youth viewed themselves positively; hence there were no real differences in self-concepts to begin with. On the other hand, this emphasis on the positive might be similar to perceptions of the influence of positive information on employer hiring standards. They also were not significantly related to employment outcomes. Apparently, youth who stress the positive do it at the expense of an adequate examination of their shortcomings. This could result in dealing with shortcomings inadequately, sending mixed signals to employers, and not investing in important aspects of job performance behavior (e.g., putting forth effort). If this is the case, then youth might benefit from guidance activities that help them make self-assessments that link self-knowledge with their occupational and career needs.

Effects of Perceptions on Outcomes

Recommendation 12: Provide youth with instruction on employer standards (especially as it concerns employers' expectations and priorities) to help them clarify the importance of their perceptions in getting and keeping jobs.

Recommendation 13: Align the sequence of instruction on employer standards to correspond more closely to their job search and job entry activities.

Summary of findings. Youth who thought that positive information highly influenced employer hiring standards at the end of the senior year were not significantly different on employer outcomes in the following year. Similar perceptions at follow-up, however, were related to higher evaluations of "work habits and attitudes." Perceptions of the influence of negative information in hiring standards were more strongly related to outcomes. Youth who perceived that negative information highly influences employer standards at the end of the senior year worked more weeks and were unemployed less. Youth with similar perceptions at the end of the follow-up year received higher evaluations of productivity, work habits, and attitudes.

Although it was presumed that perceiving that job performance standards are tough would be related positively to outcomes, exactly the opposite proved to be the case. Youth who thought at the end of the senior year that employers would be tough on job performance standards worked fewer weeks during the follow-up year. Also, youth with similar perceptions at the end of the follow-up year tended to be evaluated more negatively by their employers; these relationships were not significant, however.

Implications. The findings on the effect of perceptions of the standards revealed some significant relationship to the outcomes in the year after high school graduation. These effects were strongest for perceptions of the influence of negative information on hiring standards. This could lead to the conclusion that the latter perceptions are the most critical. However, a reconsideration of the data collection points tempers that conclusion. A review of the socialization to employer standards model used to interpret the data suggests that for perceptions to be most predictive of future job-seeking and job-keeping behaviors, data ought to be collected as youth are seeking, entering, and maintaining themselves in jobs. The data that come closest to this timing are the data collected at the end of the senior year when many youth were entering a major school-to-work transition. Consequently, youth may have been maintaining jobs or not looking for employment at the time of the other surveys. A more probable conclusion (given more frequent data collection points synchronized to job transitions), is that (1) youth who perceive that negative information highly influences employer's hiring standards during job-seeking periods and (2) youth who perceive job performance standards as tough during job entry and more relaxed about the standards after job entry will be the most successful in getting and keeping jobs. This being the case, youth not only must perceive these standards as being tougher in order to get and keep jobs, but also must have these perceptions at appropriate times in the employment cycle.

The data on youth's perceptions of the standards revealed that programmatic intervention, by and large, affected those perceptions. Nonprogram youth seemed to be at a disadvantage in their employment pursuits when compared with vocational education and college preparatory program youth. The implications here are strongest for vocational guidance. By not recognizing the severity of problems represented by items on the hiring and job performance scales, youth could be severely limiting their employability. This seems to be a matter of helping youth see connections between their perceptions and employment outcomes. The fact that some youth tend to attribute even less importance to these standards over time underscores this dilemma.

Further, it points out that occupational knowledge and work experience alone, although necessary, are insufficient for grasping the importance of the standards. Educators need to provide opportunities expressly designed to relate what is taught in classrooms to the youth's world of work. By increasing awareness of the relative importance of employer standards to school experiences and by providing planned activities for reflection and integration of knowledge and experience, educators would be in a better position to improve youth's employability. For programs like CETA, perceptions were affected but the emphasis seemed to be misplaced (i.e., emphasizing perceptions of positive factors at the expense of perceptions of negative factors).

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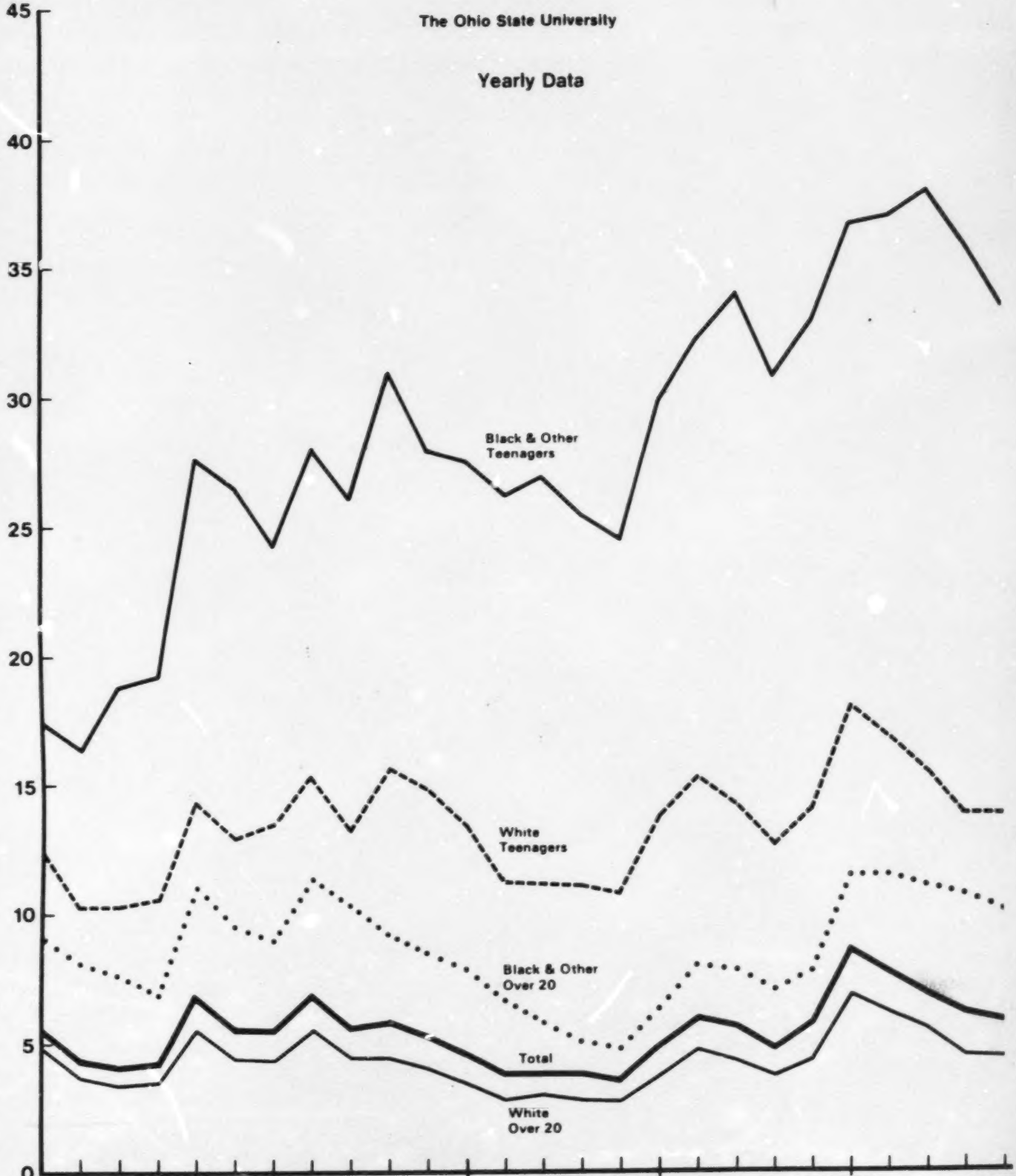

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